



BRIEFING: FEBRUARY 16, 2016, BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM #4

TO: Chairman Richard and Board Members

FROM: Michelle Boehm, Southern California Regional Director

DATE: February 16, 2016

RE: Consider Directing Staff to Negotiate and Execute a Contract with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) to Share Project Development Costs for the Integration of High-Speed Rail at Los Angeles Union Station

Background

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is advancing plans to bring high-speed rail service to Southern California. One of the key components of this planning effort involves determining how high-speed rail will be integrated into the historic Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) which is owned by the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro). The successful integration of high-speed rail with LAUS is essential given the importance of LAUS as one of the major regional gateways and transfer points in Southern California, offering connections for high-speed rail, Metro bus and rail service, Metrolink and Amtrak passenger rail service, other connecting local transit services, and multimodal travel options.

After reviewing the regional possibilities at LAUS as well as the implications for the ultimate high-speed rail alignment and operations from Burbank to Anaheim, Authority staff began working in close coordination with Metro to evaluate both agencies' planned projects and develop a list of partnership opportunities. Both agencies have recognized the possibilities to achieve more through partnership than either agency could achieve working separately. Through this process, the agencies reviewed the opportunity to fully integrate all regional rail services at LAUS and identified this integration as a leading priority based on the ability to improve regional rail service, increase ridership, and reduce the complexity of building a stand-alone high-speed rail station in downtown Los Angeles.

Based on this analysis, in October 2015, the Metro Board approved the concept of integrating high-speed rail at LAUS as part of the implementation of their LAUS Master Plan. Previous Metro concepts had identified a high-speed rail station location underground on an adjacent parcel across the street from and connected to LAUS. However, Metro and the Authority have jointly concluded that having high-speed rail run directly to LAUS will provide cost savings, enhance passenger connectivity, and facilitate rail integration benefits for all services using the station, including high-speed rail.

Metro is concurrently advancing two major projects at LAUS:

- **Programmatic environmental clearance for the LAUS Master Plan.** The LAUS Master Plan will establish the framework for transforming LAUS into a world-class transportation facility. Future implementation of the Master Plan will modernize LAUS, expand the development and commercial opportunities, and improve connectivity to the downtown neighborhoods surrounding the station including the Arts District, Little Tokyo, El Pueblo, and Chinatown.
- **Southern California Regional Interconnector Project (SCRIP).** SCRIP is the consensus #1 project on the Southern California Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) project list approved by the Authority Board and regional transportation providers starting in April of 2012. This single project has the ability to dramatically improve regional and commuter rail services by eliminating existing bottlenecks at LAUS so train service can “run through” the station rather than head in and back out through a single entrance. By improving operations as described above, SCRIP will also reduce greenhouse gas emissions at this location by approximately 40 percent. To achieve this, SCRIP proposes to expand platforms and extend “run-through” tracks over the 101 Freeway. Recently, it was identified that along with the integration of high-speed rail, SCRIP should also integrate elements of the LAUS Master Plan by incorporating improvements to the passenger concourse area.

Metro has advanced project development activities for both projects over the past few years, and that design and analysis work will need to be updated and/or modified in order to fully integrate high-speed rail. The Metro Board has asked that the Authority share a proportional cost of the work required to update these plans and for full integration. Specifically, Metro has requested a written commitment from the Authority to participate financially in the planning, development and enhancement of LAUS. Moving forward, Metro has proposed working with the Authority and other major transit operators to study and subsequently design how all services operating on the LAUS site will be integrated. It is well understood by all parties that integrating these objectives into one plan will benefit all operators.

Discussion

Project Definition and Scope

The Authority anticipates serving passengers at LAUS with up to two platforms and four tracks for high-speed rail service. These station facilities will be included in both the SCRIP engineering and environmental analysis as well as the the Authority’s environmental documents. Metro’s consultant on the SCRIP project will perform baseline analysis, engineering and technical studies, alternatives refinement, and environmental clearance for run-through tracks, the passenger concourse, and accommodation of high-speed rail platforms and infrastructure.

The current cost estimates for Metro’s SCRIP project development work is \$38,000,000. Staff proposes that the Authority contribute an appropriate proportional share of the project development costs associated with the planning, design, and environmental clearance. This

would include improvements needed to modernize the LAUS facility so it can accommodate high-speed rail on top of projected increases in regional rail and transit services. The proposal recommends that the Authority be responsible to pay an appropriate proportional share of the actual costs incurred up to a maximum of \$15,000,000.

Prior to the discussions that led to Metro Board approval to include high-speed rail at LAUS and incorporate the passenger concourse from the Master Plan, the SCRIP project was focused on regional rail improvements. The inclusion of additional platforms and associated trackwork will require reopening the design concepts and technical studies that were already under development. The expanded platform area will likely create other needs throughout the station campus to support the additional infrastructure, and these features will also be necessary to include in all the project documents.

Economies of Scope

The SCRIP project includes the station platforms and tracks as well as the immediate connecting tracks north and south of the station. The environmental documents for the Burbank to Los Angeles and Los Angeles to Anaheim Sections require some of this information in order to be completed. As such, efficiencies between the projects could be realized as both agencies advance their respective work. With the appropriate coordination and planning between Metro and Authority activities there should be a reduction in the level of effort required to complete the Authority documents in the areas of preliminary engineering, environmental analysis, and future engineering activities to complete bidding packages and services during construction. These efficiencies could result in savings on the magnitude of several million dollars. While this reduction would not be one-to-one (since the Authority will still need to oversee all tasks performed by Metro and produce Project Section Environmental Documents and any design specific and exclusive to high-speed rail) there is a clear opportunity for Metro to take the lead responsibility for key elements of work and some third party obligations including coordination with the City of Los Angeles on the Alameda Specific Plan and others on design features providing potential costs savings for the Authority.

With the Board approval of this item, Authority staff will work with Metro to identify a work plan so that all required work for both agencies is only done once, and communicate back to the Board through future Finance and Audit committee updates the specific budget for this item consistent with the authorization being requested as well as the expected reduction in professional services costs anticipated.

Recommendation

It is the recommendation of Authority staff that the Board direct staff to negotiate and execute a contract with Metro to contribute project development costs for the integration of high-speed rail at Los Angeles Union Station for a proportional share of project development costs up to a maximum of \$15,000,000.00.

Attachments

– Draft Resolution #HSRA 16-05